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8 - SEP 1964

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence  
SUBJECT: CORONA Mission 1005 Incident

1. This memorandum is for information only.
2. CORONA Mission 1005 was launched into orbit on 27 April. Telemetry data two days later indicated a malfunction had occurred. Numerous attempts at recovery during 1-20 May were unsuccessful due to the malfunction and after 20 May, no further attempts were made to command the vehicle.
3. On 5 August our Office of Special Activities received word that a satellite capsule had been reported down near the Venezuelan-Columbia border at La Fria, 500 miles southwest of Caracas in a remote region of the Andes. The capsule was turned over to the Embassy after being in the custody of Venezuelan authorities for about 10 days. It was examined by a Headquarters team sent to Caracas before being returned to the West Coast by our Security Officer.
4. For the record, it should be noted that on Thursday, 6 August, a request was made by CIA to the NRO to convene a meeting of the Interdepartmental Contingency Planning Committee to assess the problem, coordinate procedures, and assign responsibility for responding to any news media queries which might arise. The request was made in accordance with the contingency plan prepared and agreed to by all interested agencies to cope with just such a situation. During the period from 6-12 August, at least a half dozen additional requests were made to NRO to convene the committee; they were all unsuccessful.
5. As a result of this lack of coordination and failure to agree on a single course of action, the State Department inadvertently dispatched a cable instructing

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the Embassy in Caracas to acquire the capsule and return it to NASA Headquarters in Washington. This directly contravened the instructions to the CIA/NRO team already on the scene and prepared to return the capsule to LMSC on the West Coast. The erroneous instructions subsequently had to be retracted.

6. In our opinion, the confusion, conflicting instructions, and delays in accomplishing our objectives could have been avoided if the Contingency Planning Committee had been convened in accordance with the existing agreed policy procedures. As a matter of interest, the ICPC finally met on 14 August to deal with the problem.

7. The capsule was seen by a large number of Venezuelans, including officials from military police, G-2, and Minister of Defense. Photos were taken by the host government as well as by a commercial photographer and a local newspaper. It is believed a capsule transmitter which had borne "Secret" markings was removed by the host government and retained by it. It must be assumed that due to close visual observation a number of people are aware that this was a reconnaissance vehicle of some sort.

8. A comprehensive report is being developed and will be available upon completion of our investigation.

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ALBERT D. WHEELON  
Deputy Director  
for  
Science and Technology

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